



Scoil Sheosaimh Naofa

BALLINAGAR, TULLAMORE, CO. OFFALY R35 RW26

Tel: 057 9343615 Fax: 057 9350042 Roll No 17637S

Email: ballinagar.ias@eircom.net Web: www.ballinagarns.scoilnet.ie

Principal: Mr. Denis O'Connor *Deputy Principal:* Mrs. Sheila Lynam *Chairman:* Monsignor T. Coonan

Healthy School's Policy

Aim of our Healthy School Policy

Through our healthy School Policy, we aim to help students develop a healthy lifestyle that will continue into adulthood.

Benefits of a Healthy School Policy

- ✚ It helps young people develop, grow and do well in school
- ✚ It encourages the development of self-esteem and a sense of self-worth
- ✚ It prevents childhood and adolescent health problems such as obesity, eating disorders, tooth decay and anaemia
- ✚ It will develop good eating habits at a young age

Consequences of an Unhealthy Lifestyle

- ✚ Hungry children are more likely to have behavioural, emotional and academic problems at school
- ✚ Skipping breakfast leads to poor performance and concentration
- ✚ Poor eating habits and inactivity are the root cause of weight problems and obesity
- ✚ Eating disorders are becoming more common in young people
- ✚ Research suggests that overweight children are the largest group of bullying victims in schools
- ✚ Many children are overfed but undernourished
- ✚ The growing incidence of dental problems affecting self-esteem
- ✚ Poor self-esteem can prevent children from fully engaging in the school environment in a positive manner.

Healthy Lunches

A healthy diet is one that allows for a balance of different foods that sustain the well being of the individual. Different lifestyles result in different dietary needs and individuals need to be aware of the effects of different foods on their bodies. **In Scoil Sheosaimh Naofa, we are encouraging a healthy lunch so children have a balanced diet.**

- Sandwiches, fruit and vegetables, yoghurt, cheese, crackers and plain biscuits are all encouraged for lunches/snacks. Crisps, sweets, chocolate and other foods high in fat, salt and sugar are discouraged.
- Pupils are encouraged to drink water during the day. Pupils can have a plastic bottle on their table which can be taken home and refilled each day. We encourage children to use a sports bottle as it is environmentally friendly. Treats may be included in lunchboxes on Friday (at parents' discretion).
- Lunchtime is a "priority time" within the school. All pupils sit at their desks to eat their lunch and then go out to the yard for playtime. This will ensure each child eats his/her lunch and will help teachers monitor lunches.

Physical Activity

- ✚ Every child will be enabled to achieve a minimum of 30 minutes physical activity each day.
- ✚ One hour of physical education will be provided each week. These lessons will be given by class teachers or other suitably trained and qualified staff. The qualifications of coaches and facilitators will be checked prior to lessons.
- ✚ The school will provide physical and social environments that encourage and enable physical activity in a safe setting: Adult supervision, teaching in safe methods, safe facilities and the use of protective equipment are all components of a safe environment for physical activity.

- ✚ The school promotes sport and physical activity by providing information on sports clubs and physical activity opportunities within the community via written notices.
- ✚ Sports Day is also held once during the year where a variety of sports are enjoyed by the pupils.
- ✚ Our school participates in Cumann na mBunscol organised football competitions for both boys and girls teams. Our pupils also participate in athletics events, tag rugby and mini basketball.

Dental Health

Dental health and disease prevention is important so children are encouraged to drink water during the school day. We acknowledge the importance of brushing twice a day and lessons will be taught in each class on dental health to encourage good dental care and hygiene (through use of teeth model and big toothbrush). Tooth-friendly drinks i.e. milk, water, dilute unsweetened fruit juices are encouraged.

Mental Health

The school recognises the importance of mental health and how it is an integral component of general health and well-being, allowing a person to fully realise his/her abilities.

The school promotes mental health education and is currently promoting an anti-bullying campaign which will be enforced and children will be aware of. 3rd-6th class have made an anti-bullying commitment to themselves and the school by creating a hand and signing to acknowledge the anti-bullying policy.

There is a “worry box” on the ground floor corridor where pupils can discretely express any concerns. There is also a “compliment box” to create a positive and happy classroom among pupils.

Positive Parent Partnership – a speaker will be invited in to speak with the parents of incoming Junior Infants on their enrolment night in May. The

purpose of the 3Ps is to highlight to parents the importance of given their child their own independence, having a healthy lunchbox (start as you mean to go on), making friends, making the first few days as fun and enjoyable for the children etc.

To help highlight the awareness of healthy lifestyles, the following will take place:

- ✚ Teachers and children will discuss healthy eating and physical activity each term.
- ✚ During the year, all classes will receive a minimum of 2 lessons on nutrition. ACE lesson books will be used to provide one health-related and curriculum-based lesson to all classes every month.
- ✚ Teachers will provide positive modelling and supportive attitudes to encourage healthy eating.
- ✚ Pupils have the opportunity to learn how to grow fruits and vegetables, and these lessons are linked with food/nutrition classes. There is a school vegetable patch where there is a variety of fruit and vegetables sown.
- ✚ Priority lunchtime – 12:30 – 1:00 is time for children to eat in class and then enjoy their playtime in the yard/field.
- ✚ All children are encouraged to participate in plenty of physical activity with a variety of active play equipment available for use at lunchtimes.
- ✚ A Sports Day will be held in the final term, which will emphasise participating rather than winning.
- ✚ The ACE committee (2 teachers, 2 parents, 2 pupils from 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th class) will remain active and organise events each year to promote healthy lifestyles.

Timeframe for Implementation

December 2015

Responsibility for Review

The policy will be reviewed by staff and the ACE committee. The co-ordinator for this policy is Miss Aoife Byrne and Mr. Denis O'Connor.

Ratification and Communication

The policy will be presented to the BOM and to the parents' Association for ratification and parents will be given details of its contents through school newsletter.

Ratification Date: *13th April, 2016*